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# Christian Order

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# Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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## Defending the Faith

THE EDITOR

THE other day I came across a most interesting and apposite quotation published in *The Wanderer* (U.S. Catholic Weekly) for September 29th, 1983. The quotation is somewhat lengthy, but it merits close attention. Readers will see why as soon as they read it. Here it is:

"You know that the Holy Father has repeatedly, for more than 20 years now (reference is to Pope John Paul's immediate predecessors, as well as to himself — Ed.) given orders, such as on general absolution, or children partaking of the Sacrament of Confession before receiving (first) Communion, but these orders are disobeyed.

"And they will not be obeyed, in too many cases, until such time as the local people make their bishops understand that they have to be obeyed, that the bishops have to obey them (i.e. the Pope's orders).

"Even in Rome itself things are often not done as the Holy Father would like and, whenever the bishops come to Rome, he tells them what he wants on morality and catechetics and so on. But he doesn't have prisons to put them in, so many go back and don't obey.

"Oftentimes, I think some would like to obey except they are surrounded by people who implement things contrary to the will of the Church, and perhaps such bishops are afraid to discipline or make the necessary changes".



I think I should tell readers now that the Prelate who made those remarks in September, 1983 was made a Cardinal by the Holy Father at his last Consistory in May of this year, 1985. I am not aware that Cardinal Gagnon has withdrawn any of those remarks. On the contrary, he has continued to speak out with forthrightness and courage; the more so in his capacity of Prefect of the Pontifical Council for the Family.

In the same interview with *The Wanderer* from which the lengthy quotation given above has been drawn, the then Archbishop Gagnon continued in answer to a question as to whether it was within the laity's competence to insist that bishops obey the Pope :

"Oh, yes. And they have the means of doing that too. At one time a great number of bishops fell into Arianism and it was the lay people who brought them back, and through the centuries it has been like that".

Continuing, the then Archbishop stressed the importance of dealing with abuses at local level. He said :

"Local fights have mainly to be fought at the local level, and I encourage associations of parents and other groups to fight and be ready to work at the parish and diocesan level".

Then, with startling and almost brutal frankness for a cleric in his position, he went on to say that if, for example, a new document on sex education was promulgated by Rome :

"... whatever is in the document will not be implemented unless the Catholic community demands it.

"They can say we are not going to give one more cent to the parish or to the Church until you obey. And then they can give their money to other places that are genuinely Catholic, genuinely obedient to the teachings of the Holy See".

As for appeals to Rome, he said that these were, indeed, useful, but went on to add :

"One has to suffer for the truth, but at the same time, for the benefit of the truth, he must fight if he has to, using the legal means that exist.

"And one must use them. It is false to say that one

should obey and not protest when it is a question of defending Catholic truth, but one has to accept the sacrifice of fighting for the truth”.

Cardinal Gagnon's words will put fresh heart into many who have shared his thoughts on these matters for a long time, but who have been denied the opportunity of publicly professing their views and defending them. They will take fresh heart from his words. The option proposed by Cardinal Gagnon is not a soft one. There is not a scrap of easy-riding in it. The Faith is not a joy-ride; neither should we expect it to be. Now, more than ever, it has to be striven for with all we have. Cardinal Gagnon shows us the way ahead. We should take it without fear, remembering as we do, that the One we follow told us not to be afraid. “Fear not”, He said, “I have overcome the world”.

The way ahead lies there.

## VOCATIONS

Give youth an ideal  
One that stirs the heart  
An appeals deeply  
To the generous soul.  
Caveat  
Don't demean the Priesthood  
The blind  
Leading the blind.  
Modernist candy floss  
Is for kids.

—*Father Joseph Brown*

The writer of this article is a member of the Marist Congregation and Parish Priest of St. Mary's, Blenheim, New Zealand, where he is actively engaged in parish work. In addition to his parish duties, Father Bonisch finds time for reading and writing. He is well abreast of current trends within the Catholic Church, both inside and outside his own country. His comments on *Renew* merit careful study, on account of the double angle from which he writes; that of devoted parish priest and thoughtful student of contemporary church affairs.

## Reflections on Renew

(AFTER READING "*RENEW* — *AN OVERVIEW*")

D. K. BONISCH, S.M.

I had more or less overcome the misgivings I felt when I attended the exposition of Mons. Keissler and Sister Ellen last year, and the same misgivings I had when Fr. Whitefird and Fr. Austin expounded on *Renew* in Blenheim earlier this year. But now those misgivings are aroused again by what I read in the booklet and I must in conscience express them. I intend to entice none away from *Renew*, but I think it imperative to be alive to the dangers that I think it contains. I make no attempt to be systematic and ordered—I put things down as they occur to me on reading the booklet together with the things it has revived in my memory.

1) I question the whole notion of building faith and spirituality from "experience". Ours is a revealed religion. Its only source is God's word. The only way "experience" can contribute to my religious orientation, my devotion, by closeness to Christ, is when I view it in the light of the truth I have already received from Jesus revealing in the Church. The Apostles told us "what they had seen and heard"—their experience of Christ with whom they lived.



We do not have any such experience and rely wholly upon theirs for our knowledge of the faith. I do not have any experience from which I can reason, or feel, or conclude to the truths of the faith. I *accept* those truths and only then examine my experience in the light of them. Which is why I am alarmed at all the emphasis on sharing "experience" as a basis for spiritual growth. I am quoting Fr. Charles Casey, S.M. from a long time ago when I say: "We have no awareness of the supernatural"—A statement with which I entirely agree.

2) Where is the place in Renew for the spiritual renewal contained in clear doctrinal teaching repeated insistently and authoritatively, in sacramental grace, in the confessional? If there is to be any true spiritual renewal in a parish or diocese these must be well emphasised. These are the Church's and therefore Christ's instruments of renewal. Any programme which does not put them at the forefront is on the way to failure.

3) Of course, the emphasis on Scripture cannot be faulted. But as presented in the booklet it seems to me to be unbalanced. Let us remember always: the Bible is the Church's book, the Church is NOT the Bible's Church. We must beware not only of private interpretation, but also of regarding the Bible as the ultimate and highest teaching authority or source in the Church (it is NOT). And let us be very conscious that the Bible does not stand on its own.

4) The centre of the programme is commitment to the person of Jesus. This is entirely admirable. Yet one must have a care. All kinds of heretical sects can and do claim to be committed to Jesus. We need to be committed to a) the historical Jesus; that is, b) the Jesus understood and preached in the Church and by the Church; that is, c) the *certain* Jesus, not a Jesus of theological speculation, e.g. a Jesus not understanding His own nature or mission. In short, in any programme we must beware of ambiguity in our understanding of Jesus and of Catholic Doctrine. "You shall know the *truth* and the *truth* shall make you free"—not half of it, not different interpretations of it, not neglect of any part of it.

5) I am concerned about what seems to me to be an implied overemphasis on psychological fulfilment. I mean



that which, in a religious context, makes me feel good. Sometimes we need to feel bad, guilty because we *are* guilty, upset because we know we have done wrong, challenged to the acceptance of doctrines and moral teachings whose place in the Divine scheme of redemption we may not understand or may find difficult to accept. There is a real danger of skipping over such teachings in favour of everyone "feeling good". Which is disastrous to a revealed religion.

6) One hears and reads a good deal about "the Spirit" working in Renew. What standards are use in discerning which 'spirit'? Is it what makes me feel right? Is it what makes us all friends together? Is it what makes us all zealous for the social works of the parish/diocese/church? Is there a tendency to neglect the real tool of discernment—obedience to the Church especially in the person of the Pope, and total submission to the discipline of the Church e.g. in liturgical matters? For instance, the present practice in some few parishes of having the people recite the Great Doxology at the end of the Canon in the Mass, or use altar girls, or use non-traditional forms of bread for the Eucharist, *cannot* be from the Holy Spirit or for the spiritual good of the people because they are in direct disobedience to the Holy See.

7) In the booklet *Renew—an Overview* there is no adequate distinction between the teaching Church and the taught Church. True, we can all learn from one another. Yet some are charged by the Holy Spirit through the Church and in the Church to teach and guide. In Renew groups I gather that everyone teaches everyone or none teaches anyone. I know that Renew is not an exercise in catechetics. Yet the danger of error is high. And no true or worthwhile spirituality can be based on error. We are told that the priest at a meeting must not be a problem solver or a resource for teaching. But that is his job as a priest!—he is a teacher by his very office.

8) In *Renew—an Overview* the Church comes across as an assembly of equals. Of course, there is a basic and most important sense in which we are all equal—as disciples of Christ, and we must all work out our salvation in fear and trembling. But we are not all equal in teaching, guiding,

instructing. People have a right to expect teaching from their priests and the priests have an obligation to provide it. Archbishop Gerety is reported as saying: "We must understand that the Church is a body and we form it" (May 22, 1982). Of course there is a sense in which this is true. But we must be aware too that *Christ* formed the Church and there is an end to it. Any forming we do is secondary and must be within the framework given by Christ and present from the earliest times. That we all together constitute the Church, make up the Mystical Body, is, of course, an article of faith.

9) It is not in *Renew—an Overview*, but I have read that people in the groups must never be corrected even if they say something heretical like: "I don't think Jesus is really God", or "I don't think contraception and sterilisation are sins". If this is true it is disastrous. I repeat: a real spirituality can be built only on the truth. Our Lord said so. St. Paul said so. There is no room for pluralism in Church doctrinal or moral teaching. Truth is one and we must follow it or be destroyed. Warm friendships and loving relationships are most important in the Church and between men in general. They are not the most important thing. To hold the truth, to receive sacramental grace, to adhere to Christ no matter what the cost—these are the basic things. Our test of the love of God is not in the first place whether we can hug each other and feel good about it, but whether we keep the commandments.

It is not true charity or warmth to leave people in error—to say something like: "If he believes X then that's true for him and he mustn't be disturbed in his belief". That is the worst kind of uncharity.

10) I cannot help wondering if or how the exchange of experiences which is so much part of *Renew* depends on the Values Clarification philosophy. It sounds very similar—Anything is right as long as one is honest in believing it so. This rings similar to: "... experience (is) the place of revelation" (p. 31). This is simply false and will make of religion a set of subjective beliefs. The teaching of Christ handed on infallibly by the Church is the place of revelation and no other. Our experience must be examined, not vice versa.

11) I have not seen the detailed programme but other criticisms and questionings of Renew have been made and in them I read such things as:

"Recipes for invalid altar breads are found in its pages".

"Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist are multiplied beyond reason".

"Liturgical dancing is encouraged".

"Communion under both species is fostered at all Sunday Masses".

"Renew declares that the most important part of the Mass is the breaking of the bread".

"The Mass is emphasised as a community meal and its sacrificial aspect is depreciated".

Are these things true? Are these statements or anything like them in the Renew programmes? Some are heretical some flagrantly disobedient to the Holy See, some just silly (liturgical dancing). We should clearly repudiate and exclude from our own programmes any such things as these if indeed they are there.

12) The greatest need we have for renewal is enlightenment in the faith and the deepening of our faith. The faith is deficiently known by a large portion of our people, especially by the young who have been victims of deficient catechetics. I find no trace of this enlightenment in Renew as it has been presented up to now. Only such things as group dynamics of some kind, sensitivity sharing, mood elevation, and the glorification of feelings. I think this a most dangerous emphasis.

In conclusion: These observations are not original. But they are made sincerely after examining Renew as it has so far become known to me, i.e. in the expositions of Mons. Keissler and Father Whiteford and especially from the booklet *Renew—an Overview*. We have it now, at least in its preliminary stages. Please God it will prove to be for the good of the Church in New Zealand. One thing is sure. The ground is set for disaster unless every priest, strong in his own adherence to the teachings of the Popes and the Councils watches carefully and monitors any dangerous and faith-weakening elements from it.



**Father Paul Crane finds the roots of contemporary violence in the fade-out from the popular mind of those moral absolutes whose upholding is vital to the peace and stability of any human society. For its failure in this regard the Catholic Church must bear its fair share of blame.**

## CURRENT COMMENT

# Roots of Violence

THE EDITOR

**M**R. Neil Kinnock undoubtedly had a point in the parliamentary interchange that followed hard on the heels of the appalling soccer shambles at Brussels that resulted in thirty-eight dead. Mr. Kinnock's complaint that the Government's immediate concern with the prevention of violence took no account of its longer-term causes was sound enough in general terms. In the immediate aftermath of the Brussels tragedy it was somewhat misplaced. The time was out of joint. Concentration, then, had to be on short-term prevention. Long-term investigation of the causes not only of football violence, but of violence in general had to wait until the adoption of measures to deal with the immediate problem. Then, the long-term investigation could begin. One can only hope that by now a beginning will have been made. Yet, I doubt whether it has been or will be; and that for two reasons.

### *Government not a Theocracy*

In the first place and in view of the fact that the problem is basically moral, it is not within the competence of government to attempt its solution. Government, most certainly, is bound to uphold moral standards. But it is in no way bound to investigate the root causes of moral decay; still less, to instil within the individual living of its citizens those moral and religious values which so many

in this country are now discarding and the neglect of which lies at the heart of the rootless decadence that finds an outlet in violence not only on the football terraces, but in a hundred other ways. Government is not a theocracy. The Prime Minister was right, in the aftermath of the Brussels tragedy, to turn down the well-meant, but somewhat inane suggestion that her Government should place itself at the head of a moral crusade in this country. The task of investigating and instilling into the lives of a country's citizenry those moral and religious values which must be upheld if the decadence that issues in violence is to become a thing of the past, belongs to the Churches; above all, to that which is Catholic, as the direct depository of Divine Revelation and the upholder of the Moral Law.

### *Failure of the Catholic Church*

One turns again to the last two sentences of Cardinal Hume's fine article in *The Times* (6/6/85) and to which reference was made in a Leader in *Christian Order* last month: "The abandonment of objective moral principles and the dogmatism of permissiveness have combined in our day to undermine society. This is our crisis". Exactly. The Cardinal's words were spoken with reference to the Warnock Report, but they are capable of far wider application — to the whole spectrum of personal and social morality. Moral absolutes are indivisible. If there is a fall-away from them at the moment that pervades the whole of society, one can attribute this, at least in part, to a failure on the part of the clerical and religious representatives of the Catholic Church in this country — both high and low — to uphold them publicly as they should. Let them take their cue in this matter from the Holy Father himself setting, as he does, such a magnificent example in this regard; at the same time, sadly without support from those who should be the first to give it wholly to him. The same applies to the religious bodies. I am not charging the Catholic Church with this country's general moral failure. I am charging it with failure to make a significant attempt to correct it where Catholics are concerned and, in this way, to contribute to the good of the country as a whole.

## *The Church's Opportunity*

Reasons for the failure have been outlined often enough in these pages. There would appear to be little point in covering the same ground yet again in this article. Here, then, let it suffice to say that, in this country as in others, the Catholic Church is in the grip of a dogmatic, progressive permissiveness which bids her go along with what *is* rather than stand strongly aside and say what *should be*. She appears increasingly as permissive in her tolerance of a man-centered, easy-riding faith that is stripping her steadily of that transcendental singularity which should be, at one and the same time, her distinguishing mark and the focal point of her appeal to the men and women of this or, for that matter, any age. She has but to be herself — fearless in the promulgation of her supernatural message — and she will attract, impress and influence the men and women of this age, as Christ did those of His. These are bored with the pointlessness of contemporary permissive society; in so many cases, not merely bored, but frustrated because pressured to find fulfilment in that which never can fulfil them, precisely because, of its very nature, secular; therefore finite, miles removed from the deepest longings in men's hearts. "Our hearts are made for Thee, oh God, and they are restless until they repose in Thee". The reader will know who wrote those words. The great Augustine had reason to write them. Before his conversion his Mother won for him by her prayers, he had sought solace — fulfilment, if you like — in the easy-riding permissive, pagan secularism of his day. Contemporary neopagans are in the same track. In the end it left Augustine, as it is leaving so many today, empty; seeking wholeness vainly in that which, of itself, can never make them whole because there is not one atom of the supernatural in it. The Church's opportunity is here, greater than ever, I would say, within the context of the present time. Let her, then, shine her light before men. Sadly, her representatives seem fearful of this in our day. Could it be that they, too, are tinged with the prevailing secularism; content with the darkness which, in their blindness, they mistake for light? Unable to bring light to the blind because blinded themselves by false gods?



## *A Young Man's Story*

I remember still a young man who came to see me years ago, knocking at my door at 4 pm on a Saturday afternoon. He talked until eight. He had read somewhere something I had written. That is why he came to see me. He sat down and told me his story. He was still young, a born Catholic; by trade what we call a small builder. The Faith had faded from him — better, he from the Faith — some years before. He had drifted into substitutes — booze, drugs and pop — the lot. He had been through the whole syndrome, stayed in it for quite a time and then broken out of it largely, as he said, through his Mother's prayers. She was an Irish woman.

I asked him why he didn't bring his pop pals with him, now that he himself was back in the Catholic Church. "I can't", he said, "there is nothing there now". He went on in explanation, "If, in coming in, I knew that those who came with me would be told to fast, put on sackcloth and (figuratively) climb the Holy Mountain, I would have brought forty others along with me; but there's nothing of that now, nothing that really matters, nothing, then, that they really want, no absolutes, only an easy ride that calls for nothing from you. I don't like it, but I can take it. I know they can't. That's why I can't bring them in".

The hungry sheep are certainly looking up. What they want is real food. All they are getting today is permissive pap. Inevitably — very often subconsciously — substitutes are sought by way of compensation for a religion that appears as failing its people, letting out no more than a plaintive squeak in place of the clarion call that people expect of it, especially in these confused and difficult times. Religion and religious practice are fading from the English scene, being hidden from it, you might say, for fear the truth might offend and bring unpopularity to its upholders. Yet Our Lord told His disciples the world would hate them. why should we, His followers, fear the descendants of those who hated Him?

At this stage, I think it important to note that, despite the fall-off in religion and religious practice, what might be called the religious instinct continues to persist, seeking an outlet in ways with which we are all only too familiar.

There is no need for surprise here. If He who is One and True is allowed to slip from sight, other lesser deities are brought in — again, as a rule, subconsciously — to take His place, for men must have their gods. Violence has its place within this context in any of several ways — for its own sake; often by way of release that spells a kind of consummation; usually, as an essential accompaniment. We shall consider these aspects as we go along; seeing violence as a creature of the frustration that secularism brings to a desupernaturalized society, erupting so often when men pursue false gods.

### *Take Football*

Take football. I gave up watching soccer on TV long ago, before the violence on the terraces started. And why? Because, as I saw it, what had become a game was being converted rapidly into a spectacle and nothing more; a latter-day gladiatorial show where victory was all. This is what mattered. This was the crux. *Our side had to win.* The game itself was fast becoming an adjunct; an occasion of conflict sought for its own sake; no longer an exhibition of skill, as it should be and loved, as such, for itself, irrespective of victory or defeat. By contrast, a battle, with victory the only prize, sought for itself alone and by way of consummation. Meanwhile, what was left of sportsmanship was shrugged off and allowed, willingly enough, to recede into the background; consigned to the dumping ground of what were known to the Smart Alecs of the media as “Victorian values”.

### *The Lesson of Brussels*

It was crowd behaviour that set soccer on this disastrous course. Secularist rootlessness, driven by a misplaced religious instinct that had long since written off religion, sought bogus consummation in victory on the football field. This was all. In furtherance of this end “fans” identified increasingly with their teams. One had only to watch the opposed seething masses on the terraces in the grip of something very close to communal hysteria, jam-packed like sardines in a tin, colours and arms akimbo, swaying in increasingly menacing union, to see that violence was

inevitable. Deep down the mobs were baying for blood, as the crowds at the gladiatorial shows in Rome's Colosseum bayed for thumbs down and the death of a defeated opponent. What was viewed increasingly as a pitched battle on the football field would transfer itself as such and inevitably to the terraces. The mass hysteria of the soccer mob demanded — as old-time pagan religion demanded — an outlet in human sacrifice. Can we place the thirty-eight victims at Brussels in that category? I am inclined to think so, though certainly they were not sought as such; but the instinct to demolish was there as unprincipled violence, however unwittingly, sought its final consummation. At Brussels it was found. Demolition was complete. Thirty-eight lay dead on the terraces. If you start with the beer cans on the pitch, you will finish with corpses on the sidelines. The lesson of Brussels is there. It should have been learnt long ago. The sycophantic gutter Press, the media generally with its cult of the "Star", the lure of greater gate money combined to see that it was not. For such I have nothing but contempt.

### *Autonomous Man at Large*

My feelings are the same when it comes to those — Bloomsbury Hang-Overs I call them — who spend their time denigrating everything, all that is good and decent in this country and of which there is so much; stripping this country of the values that alone can keep it whole, then blaming it for the wreckage done to itself, precisely because so stripped. The wreckers are the strippers themselves, not their gormless victims who are blamed nevertheless and, as a rule, solely for the wreckage they strew about them. The wreckage is the work of the strippers of this and preceding generations whose God is autonomous man; themselves, that is, alone and in charge of their own lives, owing allegiance to no other. It has to be this way. It can be nothing else. With God discarded and His truth, both moral and divine, swept under the carpet as a consequence of His discarding, autonomous man is confronted with the impossible task of achieving what he thinks of as fulfilment on his own terms and apart from God; in disregard, therefore, of God's Law in the following of which alone true



human fulfilment is to be found. From the very outset, then, autonomous man is confronted with a basic contradiction; that of finding himself in denial of his essence, which is found only in total dependence on God. His striving, thereby, is translated necessarily into self-assertion; fulfilment on his own terms and in defiant disregard of existing standards—religious, moral, cultural and aesthetic; above all, in defiance of authority and the ordinary, customary civic consensus that establishes itself over the years under the aegis of legitimate government. All these are grist to the mill of autonomous man in his vain striving for fulfilment on his own terms and in defiance not merely of God's authority, but of all that which is thought of—in so far as legitimately exercised—as reflecting, however faintly, the authority of God Himself.

### *Violence as an Overspill of Uncontrolled Emotion*

In this game of defying and denigrating authority change is most certainly autonomous man's ally; a sop to the frustration that must be his in his vain quest for fulfilment in defiance of his own essence. The fresh experience that change brings is sought increasingly by autonomous man as something to be *felt* for its own sake; as it is so felt, instinct increasingly takes over and reason recedes into the background. In our own day, the process has filtered down, not only to the level of the crowd on the football terraces, but outwards to the point where the substance of this transfer from reason to experience has attained respectability within religious orders and, as we shall call them, basic lay groups of every sort — feel free, do your own thing, be yourself. "It's not what you think; it's what you *feel* that matters", said a Novice Master to a candidate, who told me the story himself after he had, most sensibly, packed up and left the Order. The violence which underlies the experiential emotionalism of charismatic and basic-community groupings today, does so precisely because, with reason swept under the carpet, experiential emotionalism must necessarily run unchecked. Where and in what fashion it will express itself, non-one can say. But one thing is certain; where emotion is king, authority is out. The seeds of violence—seen as an overspill of self-assertive, uncontrolled emotion — are here.

### *Instinctive, therefore Uncontrolled, Self-assertion*

The mood, then, today, is one of instinctive—and, therefore, uncontrolled because unprincipled — self-assertion. We live in a society in which, with God disregarded, each man increasingly is his own God, seeking life on his own terms, thereby in supposed fulfilment of himself. It is no wonder that, in such a world, dignity is at a discount because reasoned principle is at a discount; no longer valued — because in no way understood as, without God, it cannot be. With dignity, respect for every human being, because made in the image of God, has gone, to be replaced by the adulation of the few whose self-assertion has brought them to the top. With respect, manners have gone and, with them, there has come a descent in dress to a level of scruffiness in this country rarely seen before. Over and above all, the conversion of life into little more at best than a confused scramble in search of supposedly fulfilling experience; at worst — and the worst is increasingly common — a lacing of untrammelled violence into that scramble that finds expression not only in the mindless “fan” warfare of the football terraces, but in a thousand other ways. The street punch-ups and the muggings that have rendered sections of some of the great and distinguished cities of this country no longer safe after dusk, the violence that accompanies too many supposedly “peaceful” demonstrations, to say nothing of the “peaceful” picketing and the wicked intimidation that ran with the year-long miners strike — these are no more than revolting expressions of an ugly and dangerous trend.

### *Self-assertive Boorishness in Place of Courtesy*

I am thinking also at less dangerously aggressive level of the decline in manners already mentioned in this article and not only in those of the table, but generally. Courtesy has gone largely from prevailing society; to be replaced by the self-assertive boorishness of the would-be “tough guy”. Its lack takes many forms. I remember, some years ago, walking through a small, but lovely public London garden. I met a young priest-acquaintance, now gone from the priesthood. “Good morning, Father”, I said. “Hello”, he replied aggressively and strode on. “He’s been reading

Marcuse", I said to myself, "and was seeking confrontation in aid of his own supposed self-fulfilment. He wants me off-balance; then he will attack". In this he was unsuccessful. I know the game.

### *Sex Running Wild*

It is hardly necessary to mention sex in this context. The thing is so obvious. Here is man's most wonderful and most life-giving instinct. Set within the context of God's Law; viewed, thereby, in its beauty, not only as a source of new life, but as a means to the consummation of true love most tender and complete, sex is amongst the wonders of God's creation. Torn from its God-given context, it becomes an end in itself; something to be indulged in for its own sake alone. Thereby, the door is opened — as, indeed, it has been opened — to the debauchery of many-sided sexual abuse; all on the assumption that man, not God, is the master of his own life and makes what he wants of it on his own terms, not those of his Creator. "Let man be free", bleats the Liberal. They have, indeed, been let free to do what they want and what have they given us? A world where sex—divorced from its God-ordained purpose, seen as something to be enjoyed for its own sake—is now running wild. A world of promiscuity, perversion and pornography. A contraceptive society where man's most vital, most wonderful and, indeed, most sacred drive — divorced now from its God-ordained purpose, torn out of context and placed at man's disposal like a plaything — is now no longer serving men and women most beautifully as a means to love that is true, but is degraded to the level of an instrument of what can only be termed correctly mutual self-abuse; no more and no less than that. At this level, sex inevitably runs wild. Wrenched from its true purpose, to be sought for itself alone, there is no reason why it should know any bounds. Its all is now necessarily without restraint; thereby eternally frustrated; as such, titillated into savagery — no matter how privatized — vainly seeking what it thinks of as fulfilment on its own terms; only to be frustrated once again. Out of this comes, for example, a type of homosexual promiscuity that leads many afflicted by it — in the United States, for example — to take a



thousand partners a year. No need for me to explain further that violence — in any of a myriad forms — is inherent in this horrible state of affairs.

### *The Task Before the Church*

We return again to the moral absolutes; or rather, the increasing fall-off in their observance, which lies at the heart of this country's moral decay, along with the rising tide of violence, which is best seen as its virtually inevitable expression and accompaniment. The task is that of eradicating its causes, which are moral and religious. As such, it belongs primarily to the Catholic Church. What it calls for is something immensely positive; no less than the restoration to public and private life of the great truths, both moral and divine, consigned to her keeping. It is her vocation to uphold and promote those truths, which are essential to man's salvation. This is the task required of her. This and no other. It is for her to be faithful to it now as never before. No one in his senses believes that she will succeed overnight. The least required of her is that she should try.

### **WARMLY RECOMMENDED**

A new centre for higher studies in Theology and Canon Law has recently been set up in Rome by the Prelature, Opus Dei. Approved by the Holy See in January this year, the 'Centro Academico Romano della Santa Croce' (as it is called) will provide an unrivalled opportunity for those who wish to serve the Church through study, research and the teaching of the ecclesiastical sciences *in fidelity to the teachings of Christ and the Magisterium*. It is open to priests, religious and lay-people who would like to study for a Licenciante or Doctorate.

Any further information may be obtained by writing to :— **Fr. Stephen Reynolds, 6 Orme Court, London W2. Phone : 01-229-7574.**

The distinguished New Zealand theologian, whose articles and book reviews have appeared before in *Christian Order*, provides in very clear outline a summary of the many and dangerous errors contained in *Review—an Overview*, which Father Duggan has submitted to searching analysis. The fifty-seven-page booklet itself is reproduced by permission of the Paulist Press (Ramsey, New Jersey, USA) for use in New Zealand only.

## What's Wrong with Renew ?

REV. G. H. DUGGAN, S.M.

THOSE in charge of the RENEW programme have published an outline, *Renew—an Overview*, of the programme. To see what is wrong with RENEW it suffices to read this 52-page outline carefully.

1. *The programme makes no attempt to expound the teaching of the Church on faith and morals.*

Thus on p. 17: "RENEW has never attempted to be a catechetical experience".

On p. 23: "The groups have not assembled for formal discussion of Church teaching".

For the Holy Father, on the other hand, the first task of any programme of genuine renewal is "to deepen the knowledge of Catholic doctrine" (cf. *Osservatore Romano*, Feb. 11, 1985).

2. *In Overview we find the heretical theory of revelation and faith that was condemned by Pope St. Pius X in 1907.*

For the Church, Christian revelation is that manifestation of the Divine mysteries that was made by Jesus Christ and committed by Him to His Church to be expounded by her till the end of time, and Catholic faith is the act by

which a person accepts the teaching of the Catholic Church as the word of God that is addressed to him.

In *Overview*, on the one hand, we read (p. 31) that "*Experience is the place of revelation*. In RENEW small groups are encouraged from the very beginning to tell their stories and theologize from that experience". Our task therefore according to *Overview* is (p. 14), "to find God in everyday experience". And again, we are told (p. 15): "Begin with your own experience. Look more deeply into that experience. Test your experience with our tradition . . ."

And again (p. 16): "That's what RENEW means. The entire process from experience to insights to a new-life-style . . ."

Notice that for RENEW the starting point of the process of conversion is not acceptance of the word of God brought to us by the Church, but our own experience.

It is therefore no surprise to find that for RENEW, as for the Modernists condemned by Pope St. Pius X, faith is not our response to the teaching of the Church but is something that wells up within us as the fruit of our religious experience. We read (p. 22): "More and more people are claiming faith in Jesus from the inside-out; what people are not experiencing as a *given* all round them they are discovering deep within them and the discovery is not limited to professional ministers".

### 3. *RENEW's Conception of the Church is Protestant*

We read (p. 18): "RENEW commits itself to a model of the church that is a community of disciples; a people of God who hear the good news, respond to it in specific action, celebrate the story and the promise in sacrament, life and mission in their day-to-day experiences . . . Jesus is understood immanently in his concrete humanity and historicity, grass-roots gatherings are seen as church by RENEW so long as they remain connected to the larger church; *ministry arises out of the people and belongs to the people*".

There is not a word in this description of the Church that would serve to differentiate it from the heretical notion

of the Church that was developed by Luther and Calvin. In particular, the notion that ministry in the Church comes from below is a specifically Calvinist idea.

For the Catholic, ministry comes from above, from God, being communicated by Him to the hierarchy.

There are several passages which suggest that RENEW wants to substitute for the hierarchical Church which Christ founded another Church that would consist of the laity and of such individuals as they may choose as their delegates, to maintain good order and administer the sacraments.

We read (p. 42): "The fundamental order in the Church is the order of laity".

This contradicts the teaching of the Church, for she holds that the fundamental order in the Church is that which Christ established when he instituted the Sacrament of Holy Orders, giving the Apostles and their successors the authority to govern and teach the faithful.

Again we read (p. 46): "It is obvious to us that the Church is in the process of redefining ministry and leadership in our times. We have no idea where the Spirit of God is leading us, but we read the signs of the times . . ."

This certainly seems to imply that the Church could be led by the Spirit of God to change her essential structures and adopt new ones, becoming a Protestant organization along Presbyterian lines, with no hierarchy of Pope and bishops. It would be a Church in which the faithful would arrive at their understanding of Divine revelation by the private interpretation of Scriptures in the light of their experiences.

In such a Church, we are assured (p. 23), unity will be ensured not by submission to the authority of Pope and bishops, but "the communities of faith will be linked by the Spirit of God".

The history of Protestantism shows that such links do not suffice to bring about unity in faith.

RENEW looks forward to a new Church, with new structures and committed to the attainment of social justice as its primary task in the world. We read (p. 22): "The awareness of these groups of people banding together to develop Christian community causes many to believe that



*new structures are emerging to shape a church in change, a church moving with social trend . . ."*

This Church with new structures seems to resemble closely the "People's Church" that has come into being in Nicaragua in opposition to the Catholic Church that is governed by the hierarchy.

4. *For RENEW the primary task of the Church in its relationship with the world is the attainment of social justice.*

Overview quotes the statement of the 1971 Synod that action for social justice is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, and interprets "constitutive" as if it means "primary". It misquotes Matthew 6:33, as if Our Lord in urging us to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice was speaking of social justice, whereas it is certain that by "justice" He meant personal holiness.

5. *RENEW would subordinate the individual completely to the community and subject him to excessive psychological pressures.*

We read (p. 21): "In the 'Word made flesh' we experience the definitive revelation of who God is for us, the God who calls us to be for one another". And again (p. 22): "We discover ourselves, one another and the presence of God *only* in a community of others".

In the small groups where "people share their stories with others" (p. 17) matters will be revealed that should have been kept secret. Nor will it do to say that the other members of the group will "listen with gentleness and patience". This is a form of group dynamics or sensitivity training that is sometimes used by expert psychiatrists in psychiatric hospitals to cure the mentally ill. In the hands of amateurs the effects will *often* be disastrous.

## TREASON OF THE CLERGY

It is of vital importance nowadays that Catholics be well informed not only on the doctrines of our faith, but also on the subtle and not-so-subtle errors propagated in lectures, books and articles by dissident, and often heretical,

theologians holding prestigious positions in Catholic institutions of higher learning.

The seriousness of the situation within the very bosom of the Church is evident from the recent Vatican condemnation of *Church; Charism and Power*, a book written by Fr. Leonard Boff, a Brazilian Franciscan, who is well known for his controversial views on liberation theology.

The work above mentioned is replete with serious errors or, to be more specific, heresies, as Boff attacks the structure, dogma, exercise of power and prophetic role of the Church. In his view, according to the assessment of Cardinal Ratzinger (March 20, 1985), "the Church as an institution was not in the thoughts of the historical Jesus but evolved after the Resurrection". Consequently, the hierarchy was not divinely instituted but resulted from the need to institutionalize the Church; the true Church, therefore, can exist apart from the Catholic Church, dogma is time-bound and so has value only for a determined time and circumstance.

Unfortunately, Fr. Boff is not alone in holding these positions. He is but one among many so-called professional theologians, known today as neo-modernists. A quick glance at the writings of Fr. Richard McBrien, Dean of the Theology Departments of *Notre Dame University*, and Fr. Avery Dulles, S.J., for example, will reveal similar views and, at the same time, the seriousness of the situation in the Church, as local ecclesiastical authority ignores, for one reason or another, these errors emanating from ecclesiastical institutions.

We remind the reader that true Catholic doctrine tells us that Christ Himself founded the visible hierarchical Church and that at His resurrection it was already a going-concern; that this Church "subsists" only in the Roman Catholic Church of which the Pope is the visible head and Christ's Vicar; that Her Dogmas are revealed truths and therefore fixed and unchangeable, though, under divine guidance, subject to greater clarity and understanding.

—Fr. Thomas O'Mahoney.

The author of this well-written, simple yet perceptively profound article is in his first year at University. In itself this is sufficient to refute the claim that the young — not having known the Old Mass — are incapable of appreciating it; which makes it pointless to try and bring it back.

# Why the Tridentine Mass?

J. F. FLEMING

A FEW weeks ago I had the great privilege of serving a Tridentine High Mass in Westminster Cathedral. This solemn occasion made me realise the true grandeur of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. As the priest offered to God the supreme act of worship instituted by Christ, I saw and was part of, what I must consider, the very zenith of man's aspirations as he turns to his Creator.

Firstly there was the priest, anonymous, having shed all traits of personality, offering the Sacrifice for all the Faithful living and dead. Assisting him were the sacred ministers, and finally the acolytes, choir and people took their lawful place at this unique event in the history of man. All joined together in this timeless act with an ease and familiarity gained through centuries of love and devotion. In it a group of strangers, some of whom had never met before, came together as one family with one purpose, God's children worshipping their loving Father.

This, then is the Tridentine Mass.

We know that man's first duty is to love and worship God and he does this perfectly in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and it is on this point I intend to base my article.

The new Mass was instituted by the Church and is therefore valid. However it is, or at least has become, more man-centred than God-centred and so is both lacking in the

sense of the majesty of God and is also open to abuse; a fact which is sadly becoming ever more common.

The first thing we notice about the new Mass is that the priest is facing the people. Once the priest stood at the head of the people, offering the Mass on their behalf, now he invites us "to share in a communal meal". Once there was an anonymous priest bearing Christ's cross on his back, now (if he bothers to wear vestments) the 'president', who must "try and adapt his personality to the changing moods of the Mass" wears a garment on which all images of Our Lord's Passion have been removed. To facilitate this, altars have been replaced by tables and if it gets in the way the tabernacle is banished to a remote corner of the church. This is however more serious, since it is part of the decrease of respect for the Real Presence. Once the Precious Blood was contained in a golden chalice, now a plain glass or a clay cup can suffice. Once the Blessed Sacrament was only held in the hands of the priest, now in some churches, although condemned by the Holy Father in *Inaestimabile Donum*, the people pass It from one to another "sharing a gift". The distinction between the sacred and the profane was lost with the altar rails, and the sign of peace has turned the Mass into a social gathering.

The beauty of the Mass has been destroyed not only through the irreverence of the new sanctuaries but through the loss of Latin and therefore through the loss of the Church's rich musical heritage. Although we may belong to many nationalities and cultures we all share the common Latin Rite. This is a great unifying force and a visible sign of the universality of the Church and, therefore, is the first reason why Latin should be retained. There are, however, other reasons; of these the main is the difficulty of finding adequate translations. The official English version (which in itself lacks all literary merit) clearly illustrates the problem of providing a worthy vernacular translation and, of course, since English is a living language, as soon as one version is prepared it has to be updated and revised. It is much more sensible (even from a purely linguistic point of view) to bring people, by whatever means, to an understanding of the unchanging Latin than to set up a Tower of Babel of constantly changing vernacular versions.



Following from this the Church has lost her rich treasury of music, most especially Gregorian chant. Now the new Mass is accompanied by songs (they cannot be called hymns) which are either heretical, nonsensical or simply profane, and of course they are usually played on a whole range of unsuitable instruments and not the traditional organ.

We are constantly told to put ourselves in tune with the Mass and to fit our emotions in with it. How different this is from the Tridentine Mass which asked for nothing more than love and devotion and which cloaked our human mistakes in a divine simplicity and perfection. The Tridentine Mass was the model of both extreme simplicity and extreme dignity.

Thus we see the contrast, the Tridentine Mass, something directed towards God, built on faith and reason, simple yet beautiful, firm and unchanging, and then the new Mass, centred on man, based on emotion, dependent on human performance, and above all open to serious abuse.

The Mass is the centre of our Faith, it is the continuation of Christ's sacrifice and a pledge of God's promise to us and so we should make it the centre of our lives. The Tridentine Mass is our heritage, handed down to us through the centuries of persecution and suffering; it is the most perfect and beautiful form of the Mass that we know. Let us pray that it is restored to the life of the Church.

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### **P.E.E.P. CONFERENCE**

May we remind readers of the P.E.E.P Conference to be held in mid-October, as per the advertisement on the outside of the back cover of the Aug./Sept. number of *Christian Order*. Enquiries to:

**Mrs. S. Coote, 78 Hurst Lane, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9DY. Phone 979-2654.**

By courtesy of the Antony Roper Catholic Foundation, we are privileged to publish in two parts the first Antony Roper Memorial Lecture delivered in London by Michael Davies on April 10th, 1984.

Copies of this memorable lecture are available at 65p (post free) as per the advertisement on the outside of the back cover of this issue of *Christian Order*.

# The Catechetical Revolution - Blessing or Disaster ?

## 1

MICHAEL DAVIES

AS Christians, we believe ourselves to have an eternal destiny. Other creatures on our planet live then die, and are no more. But we have been brought into being by an omnipotent Creator to know Him, love Him and serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him in the next. We cannot love someone we do not know, and we cannot serve Him unless we know His will for us. The Christian religion is unique in claiming that God Himself became man, that God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and dwelt amongst us, and we saw His glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. We believe that on the altar of the Cross, as Priest and Victim, He offered Himself in atonement for our sins; that He rose again from the dead, and, with the body which had been placed in the tomb. He ascended into heaven to prepare a place for those who follow Him. All Christians believe this, but as Catholic Christians we believe something more; we believe that, although Our Lord Jesus Christ has ascended into heaven, He also remains with us here upon earth. He is present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the altar, that is, with His physical body, that very body Pope Paul VI

reminded us, in the Encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, which was born of the Virgin and which hung upon the Cross, and which is seated at the right hand of the Father. Our Lord is also present among us in His Mystical Body, which is the one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. The mandate entrusted to Our Lord by His Father was to save the whole human race without distinction of time or place. This is the mandate which He entrusted to His Church, which, in its most profound reality, is Christ Himself, an extension of the Incarnation throughout the nations and the centuries. We believe that the Mystical Body is a visible body, with marks which enable us to identify it without erring. It is visible through the profession of the same faith, the use of the same means of grace, primarily the seven sacraments, and subordination to the same authority. These three marks, of course, represent the threefold office of Our Lord which He transferred to His Church, teaching, priestly, and pastoral. Our Lord consecrated His apostles as bishops, transmitted His powers to them, and commanded them to teach all nations. Those who heard the apostles heard Him, those who rejected the apostles rejected Him. He promised to remain with His Church until the consummation of the world.

I am concerned tonight primarily with the teaching office of the Church, that of teaching mankind to observe all things whatsoever commanded by Our Lord. The Church cannot fail in its mission as Our Lord will be with it until the consummation of the world, and to ensure that it will not fail in its teaching office it has been invested with the charism of infallibility. This does not mean that every statement by every bishop or every pope is divinely protected from error. What it does mean is that when the teaching authority of the Church, the Magisterium, defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, there is no possibility of error. This teaching authority was imparted by Our Lord to the apostles and their successors. It can be invoked by the Pope teaching either in union with the bishops, or in his personal capacity as the successor of St. Peter and the Vicar of Christ. Such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are infallible of themselves and not from the consent of the

Church. This is a very important point. A good number of Anglicans and other Protestants would be willing to accept the papal primacy if all it meant was that the Pope was a chairman who articulated the prevailing consensus of opinion within the Church at a given moment. But this was not the mandate given by Our Lord to the Apostles. He did not say: "Go forth and set up discussion groups and whatsoever conclusions they shall come to, those you shall teach". He said "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark, 16:16).

We hear a great deal today about the *sensus fidelium*, which can perhaps best be described as an instinct or feeling for orthodoxy among all the members of the Church. This instinct protects the entire Church from ever falling into error, and helps the faithful to accept the definitive teaching of the Magisterium. The Magisterium is also known as the Teaching Church (*ecclesia docens*), and the rest of us belong to the "Taught Church" (*ecclesia discens*). The existence of the *sensus fidelium* most certainly does not mean that the Teaching Church, the Magisterium, must make or unmake doctrine according to the caprices of what might appear to be majority opinion within the Church. Speaking in May 1970, Pope Paul VI warned against certain theologians who are doing precisely that: "They would like to turn to the opinion of the faithful in order to know what they wish to believe, and attribute to the faithful a questionable charism of competence and experience which puts the faith at the mercy of the strongest and most easily voiced choices. All this happens when one does not submit to the Church's Magisterium, which the Lord willed to protect the truths of the Faith".

### Theologians

Having mentioned theologians, I had better point out that they do not form part of the Magisterium. The function of a theologian is to explain the teaching of the Magisterium and draw conclusions from it. The basis of our faith is immutable, but it is always possible to have it explained more clearly, or for a legitimate development of doctrine to emerge from the theologians' research and speculation.



But it is for the Magisterium alone to judge the theories of the theologians. Some it will accept and incorporate into the official teachings of the Church, others it will reject. When this happens a truly Catholic theologian will submit to the judgement of the Church, but some put more faith into their personal competence than they do in the promise made by Our Lord to be with His Church until the consummation of the world. In former times such theologians left the Church and attacked her from without. Today, alas, they are only too often allowed to retain their positions and attack her from within.

### **The Religion Teacher**

The religion teacher in a Catholic school is not a theologian. His task is not to study the opinions of theologians and put their speculations before his pupils, but to help them learn the more important teachings of the Magisterium as thoroughly as possible in a manner consistent with their age and ability. Obviously, I am taking it for granted that he will try to set his pupils an example of Christian living; to develop sound habits of prayer and piety, and to lead them to behave as well as to believe as Christians. But in matters of attitude and behaviour a child will normally tend to reflect his family background and the prevailing tendencies within his immediate circle of friends. If a child leaves a Catholic school as an indifferent Catholic it is unlikely that his teachers will be to blame, but if he leaves his school ignorant of basic Catholic doctrine then there is every justification for considering the religious teaching in that school to have been inadequate.

### **The Old Catechetics**

The points I have made so far are fundamental to the thesis of this lecture. Let me summarise them for you once more.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ founded a visible Church to continue the work entrusted to Him by the Father, i.e. to save the whole human race.
2. The Apostles and their successors were given authority to teach in His name. Those who heard them heard Him.

3. The Pope and the bishops united with him have the power to teach infallibly.
4. The Magisterium teaches the doctrine entrusted to it by Our Lord, i.e. the deposit of faith. This doctrine emanates from Christ and not from a consensus of the faithful.
5. Our duty as Catholics is to hear and accept the teaching of the Magisterium.
6. Theologians perform an important role within the Church, but do *not* form part of the Magisterium.
7. The first duty of teachers in Catholic schools is to convey the teaching of the Magisterium to their pupils.

Before the Second Vatican Council it would have been hard to find any English-speaking Catholic, theologians included, who would have disputed these points. But at the same time there was considerable discussion and debate concerning the most effective methods of teaching religion. The "old catechetics", if we can so term it, was referred to as "religious education" when I trained as a Catholic teacher in the early sixties. Before that it had been referred to as "religious instruction", and earlier still it had been known as "catechism". I know that many Catholics are still not sure of the exact meaning of "catechetics". The word is derived from a Greek root meaning "to instruct" or "to teach"; literally, "to din into the ears". Why we had to start speaking of catechetics instead of religious education I don't really know. It reflects a trend in the education world never to use a straightforward word if a complex one can be found.

Catechetics, then, is simply a trendy name for religious education. And what was religious education like before and immediately after Vatican II? As with most other subjects it depended upon the teacher. It is sometimes suggested that before the Council the religion lesson consisted of nothing but learning catechism questions, and being strapped or caned if one deviated from the formula by so much as a word. Obviously, this is ridiculous exaggeration, but from what I have been able to discover, quite a number of teachers did tend to use the catechism as a text-book, which it was never intended to be. There was a strong movement to improve the quality of religious educa-

tion, led by Canon Drinkwater. He produced countless aids to make the teaching of religion more interesting, and was severely critical of teachers who used the catechism as a text-book, but, and this is very important, he was never opposed to the use of the catechism. Canon Drinkwater wanted questions from it to be used to consolidate teaching that had been given in a lesson or a series of lessons, using the most effective methods and aids possible to bring the topic to life for children of a particular age group and ability. In this way, although the child would learn only one or two questions a week, at the end of ten years in a Catholic school, or even Saturday catechism classes, he would at least know what his Faith was.

I mentioned earlier that I trained as a teacher at the beginning of the sixties when the Second Vatican Council was in progress. The lectures I was given on teaching method were precisely on the lines advocated by Canon Drinkwater, and we were supplied with a book, *Teaching the Religion Lesson*, by Father Kevin Cronin, which I still feel would be hard to improve on, and it said it all in ninety-four pages. One could get books by German priests in the same field which said the same thing in 400 or 500 pages, but that seems to be the German way. I have noticed that whatever their theological position, progressive or traditional, German writers seem to believe that a point should never be made in one sentence if it can be made in one hundred. Some excellent series of text books were appearing in the U.S.A., but my favourite was a text book emanating from Germany, the so-called German Catechism. It was, in fact, a superb text book, well researched, well written, well illustrated, and, I think, has never been bettered. It was already available in English in 1957, and had been translated into many other languages. I would like to see it reprinted at once and used for religious teaching in all our secondary schools, but I don't think this likely. The reason will become clear later. Evidently, this book was not a fruit of the Second Vatican Council as it appeared before it had been convoked. I have little doubt that had the Council not taken place we would have had a renewal in the teaching of religion, but a gradual and sound

one which would have brought immense benefit to the Church in the English-speaking world.

The object of the catechetical movement was to open up the entire richness of Catholic doctrine to people who had only been receiving it in a sadly limited manner. Similarly, there was the liturgical movement which was making slow but steady ground in bringing the Catholic people to share more fully in the incomparable treasury of our liturgical heritage. There was still much to be done, but definite progress had been made. Then came the Council.

### **The Background to the Second Vatican Council**

It would not be possible to give a balanced appraisal of the catechetical revolution without placing it within the context of Vatican II, but we must first place the Council within the context of our times. The greatest problem facing the ordinary Christian is that he must be in the world but not of the world. He is a citizen of heaven, and only a sojourner upon earth. But all too often he has to live in a society which is not predominantly Christian, and he cannot help being influenced by the predominating trends within that society, and these almost invariably conflict with the demands of the Faith.

This problem has always been particularly acute for Catholics involved in any way with the intellectual life of their times. In his *Popular History of the Catholic Church*, Monsignor Philip Hughes notes that already by the end of the third century: "We are seeing the appearance of types that will never cease to reappear throughout two thousand years: Catholics who propose to explain Catholicism by synthesis with the intellectual life of the time." This problem had never been more acute than it was for Catholic academics at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century. Protestantism was already being undermined, particularly in Germany, by a destructive form of biblical criticism which attacked the very basis of Christianity. Not only was doubt cast upon such fundamental doctrines as the Resurrection, but eventually God Himself was reduced to no more than a symbol of the collective aspirations of mankind at any particular epoch. God was a projection of humanity's ideal view of itself, and as this view changed so did God.



The movement initiated by the German critics spread to France, and gained a notable convert in Joseph Renan, who had been a seminarian. These critics, Renan maintained, had "forced Jesus to renounce His divinity". A number of priests felt that in order to retain its credibility the Church needed to accept at least some of the findings of the higher criticism, as it was known. This resulted in the Modernist movement. Many of its proponents were certainly sincere in their desire to serve the Church by modernizing her teaching. This, they felt, was the only way in which she could survive. But much of the higher criticism was totally incompatible with the defined teaching of the Church. Well, explained the Modernists, the truth of this teaching is relative. It was true for Catholics in one epoch, it expressed what they felt about Jesus, but it would be wrong to impose this teaching on Catholics of another century as obligatory for membership of the Church.

Before long the leaders of the movement were resorting to publicity to retain their influential positions while holding beliefs incompatible with the Faith. St. Pius X condemned the Modernist movement with the Encyclical *Pascendi* in 1907. Its leaders were excommunicated, and soon proclaimed openly the heresies they had believed secretly. But had the Pope not acted firmly this most dangerous of heresies would have spread like a virus throughout the Church.

St. Pius X had suppressed the external expression of Modernism, but Modernists still remained within the Church, waiting for their day to come. The resurgence of what we can term neo-modernism had become so serious after the Second World War that Pope Pius XII felt it necessary to issue an encyclical *Humani Generis*, warning the bishops of the world of certain false trends which threatened to sap the foundation of Catholic teaching. This encyclical is still in print and is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand what is happening in the field of religious education today. In 1950 the opinions condemned by the encyclical were circulating in a semi-clandestine manner among theologians. Today they provide the basis for the religious instruction given to our very youngest children. Doubt, Pope Pius warned us, was being cast upon

the existence of angels, the teaching of the Council of Trent on original sin, and, indeed, sin in general considered as an offence against God. It was being suggested, he complained, that the doctrine of transubstantiation should be revised in a manner which would make the presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist a symbol and no more; it was even suggested that the Mystical Body of Christ and the Catholic Church were not synonymous. Those subscribing to these errors, the Pope explained, were motivated by an attitude of false ecumenism, "a burning desire to break down all the barriers by which men of good will are now separated from one another". Some had "too ready an ear for novelties" and were "afraid of seeming ill informed about the progress which science has made in our day. At any rate they are eager to emancipate themselves from Authority; and the danger is that they will lose touch, by insensible degrees, with the truth divinely revealed to us, leading others besides themselves into error".

#### **Authority and Democracy**

"They are eager to emancipate themselves from authority", the Pope warned. A changing attitude to authority is the basis of many of the problems in religious education today. Remember the date when Pope Pius XII wrote *Humani Generis*, 1950. It was soon after World War II, and during the repressive period of Stalin. The fascist dictatorships which had just been overthrown had given a bad name to any form of authoritarianism, even to the concept of authority. Democracy was all the rage. One must not dictate to people, one must consult them, dialogue with them, give them what they want. Many European theologians had lived under Nazi occupation, and their dislike of authoritarianism is hardly surprising. This democratic attitude is even more marked today. In almost every sphere of political, educational and commercial life someone is consulting someone about something, and there is not much point in carrying out a consultation if you intend to ignore the eventual consensus. But the Catholic Church is not and cannot be democratic, particularly where doctrine is concerned. It is not for the faithful to decide for themselves what they will believe and how they will behave. Their duty is to listen to the Magisterium, which

is to listen to Christ, and to accept what the Magisterium teaches. This is an unpopular attitude, but it is the only authentic Catholic attitude to legitimate authority within the Church.

### **The Second Vatican Council**

I shall not say much about the Second Vatican Council. Quite why Pope John XXIII decided to convene it no one knows. He claims it was the result of divine inspiration. Others have suggested that the elderly pontiff did not like being thought of simply as a stopgap pope, and called the Council to ensure himself a place in history. Well, he certainly achieved that. He spoke of opening up the windows of the Vatican to let in a little fresh air, but the effect upon the Church is as if a tornado had smashed through it. Cardinal Heenan told us that the Pope and most of the Council Fathers shared an illusion that they had come together for a short convivial meeting. God was merciful in allowing Pope John to die before witnessing the results of his decision to hold a Council.

I must make a distinction here. It is the distinction between the Council itself, and the Council as an event, and it is an important distinction. We will first consider the Council in itself, that is, in the teaching found in its sixteen official documents. These documents contain much sound and even inspiring teaching, but some are banal and full of platitudes and in some places there are unfortunate ambiguities. There was considerable tension between the conservative and progressive Fathers, and where agreement could not be reached compromise texts were drawn up, which each side could interpret in its own way.

Where Pope John XXIII was concerned, there was no question but that his council should uphold orthodoxy. In his opening speech he stated :

The greatest concern of the Ecumenical Council is this : that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously . . . to transmit that doctrine pure and integral without any attenuation or distortion which throughout twenty centuries, notwithstanding difficulties and contrasts, has become the common patrimony of men.

That was the Pope's intention. The result was somewhat different.

"I often wonder", wrote Cardinal Heenan in 1968, "what Pope John would have thought had he been able to foresee that his Council would provide an excuse for rejecting so much of the Catholic doctrine which he wholeheartedly accepted". The solemn closure of the Council took place in December 1965. By 1967 Pope Paul VI was so alarmed at tendencies appearing throughout the Church that he spoke out in terms reminiscent of St. Pius X in the encyclical *Pascendi*, to which I have already referred. St. Pius X described the original Modernists as "partisans of error" working within the "very bosom" of the Church where "they put into operation their designs for her undoing". Pope Paul VI lamented the fact that : "In the very bosom of the Church there appear works by several teachers and writers who, while trying to express Catholic doctrine in new ways and forms, often desire rather to accommodate the dogmas of the Faith to secular ways of thought and expression than be guided by the norms of the teaching authority of the Church".

In 1968 he stated openly that these deviations from orthodoxy were being justified in the name of Vatican II :

It will be said that the Council authorized such treatment of traditional teaching. Nothing is more false, if we are to accept the word of Pope John who launched that *aggiornamento* in whose name some dare to impose on Catholic dogma dangerous and sometimes reckless interpretations.

Sadly, with very few exceptions, Pope Paul VI tended to do no more than lament abuses. If he had followed the example of Pope St. Pius X and excommunicated those who refused to return to orthodoxy after repeated admonitions, then the situation of the Church today might be very different. There is a paradox here, a tragic paradox. While Pope Paul VI deplored the abuses and deviations from orthodoxy perpetrated in the so-called "spirit of Vatican II", he was inhibited from taking effective action because, in his own way, he was a prisoner of that very same spirit. I will try to explain why.



## The Council as an Event

I have already said that we can consider the Council in two ways, in itself and as an event. It was the Council as an event which was primarily responsible for generating the ubiquitous spirit of Vatican II. I have shown in my book, *Pope John's Council*, and I think that few if any commentators on the Council would dispute this, that the most influential people at Vatican II were not the Council Fathers, the bishops, but the expert advisers they brought with them, the *periti*. This was certainly the opinion of Douglas Woodruff, the outstanding Catholic journalist in England during the post-war era, and the Editor of *The Tablet* when it was a Catholic journal. Vatican II, he wrote, "has been the Council of the *periti*". *Peritus* plural *periti*, is the Latin word for an expert adviser. These were the men brought to the Council by the bishops to offer them expert theological advice. In the case of some of the prominent European theologians, they were the very men against whom the encyclical *Humani Generis* had been directed. But their views were precisely the views which representatives of the media covering the Council found sympathetic, the very views which coincided with the spirit of the post-war era, man rather than God as the focus of our attention. Some of the *periti* were given a pop-star build up in the media.

Hans Küng provides a typical example. He and those who thought like him were presented as fearless champions of freedom and enlightenment, men who would save the Church by making it relevant in the second half of the twentieth century; and by relevance they meant that the Church must adopt as its principal concern those priorities currently preoccupying the leaders of secular thought. This meant that the Church must have as its primary concern not life in the next world but life in this; the Church must focus the attention of its members not on avoiding sin and practising virtue in order to avoid hell and attain heaven, but in combatting poverty, injustice, and inequality wherever they are to be found. And in striving to achieve these objectives, Catholics must work with men of any belief or none. Thus not even Communism could be condemned. Four hundred and fifty of the Fathers attempted to have a

specific condemnation of atheistic Communism included in the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, but their identically worded amendments were suppressed by an act of calculated and arrogant fraud and could not be debated. To the best of my knowledge, there has not been a specific condemnation of atheistic Communism by the Vatican since the Council.

The attitudes I have been describing are not found primarily in the Council documents, although they can be discerned there with the help of hindsight, particularly in *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. No, these attitudes become widespread as a result of what I have been terming 'the Council as an event'. The Liberal *periti*, some of whom made it clear later that they were neo-modernists, were able to spend months together in Rome during the years of the Council, living in great comfort at the expense of the ordinary faithful. Instead of being somewhat isolated individuals, often under suspicion, who needed to express their ideas with great caution, they found themselves among dozens of like-minded theologians, and, moreover, the heroes of the hour. They were idolized by the media, they were soon having discussions, official and unofficial, with theologians from other countries, and even giving lectures to the bishops. They were the men who drafted the documents for which the bishops voted, and, as Bishop Lucey of Cork and Ross, Ireland, complained, the *periti* were, in reality, more powerful than the bishops. They did not, as I have already explained, succeed in getting many of their ideas spelled out explicitly in the Council documents, but sadly, and I say this in all seriousness, the Council in itself, in its official documents, was of far less significance for the future of the Church than the Council as an event. Hundreds of theologians and bishops returned to their own countries in 1965 with a totally different attitude to the Faith from that which they had brought to Rome in 1960. They wouldn't dispute this, in fact they would glory in the fact. They were men who had seen the light. Bishop William Adrian of Nashville, Tennessee, in the U.S.A., notes how first the American theologians, and then many of the bishops, were converted by the European *periti*. "Some conservative American bishops", he wrote, "following their

second-rate *periti*, joined the revolutionary group to bring about whatever their mentors thought best. The European *periti*, who really imposed their theories upon the bishops, were themselves deeply imbued with the errors of Teilhardism and situation ethics, which errors ultimately destroy all divine Faith and morality and all constituted authority”.

Bishop Adrian then drew attention to the error which lies at the basis of the confusion in the post-conciliar Church, an error which also lies at the basis of the catechetical crisis, an error to which I have already referred several times. Please pay particular attention to these words: “They make the person the centre and judge of all truth and morality irrespective of what the Church teaches. It is the root of the evil of this disrespect for authority, divine and human”.

The Bishop was correct, the person becomes the centre and judge of all truth and morality irrespective of what the Church teaches. Man, not God, becomes the ultimate arbiter of truth; the ultimate arbiter of what is right and what is wrong. Let me quote a few more words from Bishop Adrian:

These liberal theologians seized on the Council as the means of decatholicising the Catholic Church while pretending only to deromanize it. By twisting words and using Protestant terminology and ideas they succeeded in creating a mess whereby many Catholic priests, religious and laymen have become so confused that they feel alienated from Catholic Culture.

These words were written in 1969, but I am sure they express what many of us feel, that is, totally alienated from what is presented to us today as “Catholic Culture”. We simply cannot recognize this Faith in most of the religious text books imposed upon our children in so-called Catholic schools today; we cannot recognize it in what is imposed upon us as Catholic liturgy in many of our churches; we cannot recognize it in the prefabricated socio-political pseudo-religious claptrap emanating from the National Pastoral Congress under the guise of Catholic opinion. Let me add a word of comfort here: if you feel distressed and alienated at so-called Catholic culture today, then do not

be upset, you have nothing to worry about. If there is anyone here tonight who doesn't feel alienated and distressed, then heaven help him. He really needs to worry.

And what is the justification for all these aberrations? There is a blanket response to any complaint you will make: you are opposing the Second Vatican Council. Bear in mind that by 1968 Pope Paul VI had protested publicly at the already established practice of invoking the Council to justify "dangerous and sometimes reckless interpretations". In many cases a change imposed in the name of the Council is diametrically opposed to what the Council actually mandated. I will restrain myself from going into great detail on the extent to which this is the case where the liturgy is concerned. Do you regret the fact that in many of our churches Gregorian chant has been replaced by hymns in what purports to be a folk idiom, often with words and music of almost heroic banality? Dare to complain and you will be castigated as an anti-conciliar rebel. But did you know that Vatican II actually ordered that Gregorian chant should become the norm for sung Masses? Did you know that there is not a word in any conciliar document ordering or even recommending the entire Mass in the vernacular; Mass facing the people, standing for Communion, Communion in the hand, lay Ministers of Communion, thrusting the tabernacle aside to an obscure corner? But for those imposing these changes, what the Council actually taught, or what the Council actually ordered, is of no importance. What is important is that we act in the "spirit of Vatican II". And who interprets this spirit? — why, they do, of course.

### **The New Catechism**

Within a few years of the conclusion of Vatican II some Catholic teachers and parents became anxious about tendencies they detected in the teaching of religion. If they expressed their misgivings they were told not to worry as it was simply a question of new methods to implement the teaching of the Council. There was a virtual epidemic of catechetical courses during the late sixties. Some were excellent, and promised every hope of a fruitful conclusion to the catechetical movement led by Canon Drinkwater. I



attended some myself and derived considerable benefit from them. Every conscientious teacher should be open to new ideas to improve his teaching, but he should also receive new ideas in a critical spirit. Some of the new ideas and new approaches in the field of education have turned out to be no better than the old, in some cases they have proved harmful to the children. The "Look and Say" method of teaching to read, which claimed that phonics were not necessary, resulted in large numbers of young children not learning to read at all. Now phonics are very much back. In the early seventies the initial teaching alphabet was very much in vogue, I doubt whether a dozen or so schools in the country use it now.

As I remarked earlier, a conscientious teacher should be open to new ideas, but should examine them critically; and I think this is how most teachers approached the new catechetics. One Catholic headmaster, an active member of the Catholic Teachers' Federation, wrote in 1973 :

Initially the majority of teachers were only too ready and anxious to study or try out new methods in religious teaching. But grave distrust arose once it became clear that many of those in charge of catechetics were hellbent on changing much more than methods. Students arriving at one college for a catechetical course were told : "You have come here thinking you are going to learn new methods. You are going to learn new doctrines".

There you have it. That is what went wrong with the new catechetics. It began as a praiseworthy attempt to improve methods, but soon began to teach new doctrines, a new religion in fact, a religion that was radically incompatible with the Catholic Faith founded by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

*(To be Concluded)*

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## PLEASE

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much.

—Paul Crane, S.J.

The Author, who is a Senior Lecturer in Law at Leeds Polytechnic, writes : the purpose of this article is to show how a few simple principles drawn from the discipline of logic may assist in defending certain important Catholic dogmas.

# Tradition, Truth and the Catholic Church

JOHN BEAUMONT

THE claim is often made today by liberal and modernist churchmen and theologians that we must rethink the Christian view of the world; that we must "keep up with the times" and take account of "new insights". This is frequently accompanied by a statement that, because of the uncertain and fearful times in which we live, there is need for an "agonising reappraisal" of traditional Christian beliefs.

How should we react to all of this? Two thoughts always come to my mind. First of all, the sheer arrogance and elitism of certain modern theologians to think that they have been accorded an insight that was not given to the great Fathers and Doctors of the Church, who down the centuries hammered out an authentic Christian philosophy whilst remaining humble in submission to holy mother Church. Secondly, on the question of "agonising reappraisal", is the world really so much worse today? Has it not throughout human history contained much wickedness and suffering? If Christians could still believe in God in spite of the Black Death or the Thirty Years' War, they can still do so after Hitler, Stalin or the Khmer Rouge.

Yet, these two responses, though I hope understandable and not without value, are not formulated with any precision. Can we refute the claims referred to above by some more objective and rigorous means? I think we can. In order to do so, it is necessary first of all to accept one

fundamental and vital fact, one that hopefully will be self-evidently true. It is simply this: *truth is fixed*. It cannot grow old, or change, or be destroyed. The laws of physics which exist today existed on the day of creation. Of course, men may grow in their understanding of those laws in the way that modern scientists now know much more about them than was known in, say, the Middle Ages. But the laws themselves are the same and have not changed.

In the same way, divine revelation, those dogmatic truths which have been revealed to us through the agency of God's one true Church, the Catholic Church, are immutable. As Fr. John McKee expresses it:

"The truth about the truth? Well, the truth about the truth — here comes the earth-shaking revelation — is that it is *true*. And being true, it shares in God's timelessness; *veritas Domini manet in aeternum*" (*The Truth about the Truth*).

Of course, the Church, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, may come to reflect more and more profoundly upon these truths. Mgr. Gilbey puts it in this way:

"All the time the Church is understanding herself better and explaining herself better. That is what she is doing when she defines doctrines; she is not innovating or initiating them but making precise the 'faith once delivered to the Saints' (Jude 3). Catholics do not believe that Our Blessed Lady was made immaculate in 1854 or that the Pope became infallible in 1870. The deposit of faith closed with the death of the last Apostle. The Church's deepening understanding of it has continued ever since" (*We Believe*, p. 79).

The same point may be made by looking at the Creeds. The Athanasian Creed is much more detailed than the Apostles' Creed, but the truths for which they both stand remain the same.

Now, having prepared the groundwork, my question for the modernist is simply this: What possible reason could anybody have for believing the new, revised Christian story? If a tradition or corpus of belief has been continuously preserved and guarded from the time when it first arose, as has the dogmatic teaching of the Catholic Church, then we are believing exactly the same as was believed by

the founders of that tradition, and we are right in believing it, provided, of course, that they were right. But any theologian who argues for a new revised version of Christianity has broken away from this chain of testimony and cannot appeal to it for support. In addition, he would seem to be caught in a dilemma. Let us suppose for one moment that he is right about certain doctrines. If this is so, then two possibilities follow. *Either* i) it was in error from the very start; or ii) it was true originally, but then was corrupted at some later point as it was handed on from one generation to another.

Now, if the former of these two possibilities is true, then we obviously cannot embrace Christianity. Our beliefs would be based on falsehood, and nothing further remains to be said. But, suppose that the latter is the case, in other words there *was* a divine revelation, but it has become corrupted. Things then would be very little better, for how would we set about reconstructing the original revelation? It could only be a matter of conjecture and opinion; and could not possibly demand our assent. And without such a reconstruction we would be almost as much in the dark as if there had been no revelation at all.

No, it is only on the basis of a claim to have preserved an *unchanging* deposit of doctrine that the Christian message is credible at all. And it is just at this point that the vital importance of accepting the divinity of Our Lord, a doctrine much assailed today, becomes apparent. The founders of the Christian tradition claimed to have their teaching from the lips of Christ. But their testimony, like all historical testimony, in order to be credible, must go back to an original revealer who claimed not merely to *believe*, as they did, but to *know*. And this, of course, is exactly what the traditional doctrine of the Church states with regard to Our Lord. His voice is infallible simply because He is God and as such is all-knowing, all-good and all-powerful. Thus, He could not err and therefore we can have absolute, unquestioning, unqualified confidence in Him.

But this is not what the modernists say, who see Our Lord as merely a very good man. The problem with this



view though, is that however great His qualities as a man, there would then be no guarantee of truth. As one writer has expressed it:

“People nowadays readily speak of Christ’s *faith* in his Father and his mission, even, God help us all! his faith in humanity; but if he only had faith, he walked in the dark as we do, step by step, and why should we now believe because he only believed? He was a very impressive man by any standards, but very impressive men have believed all sorts of things and cannot all have been right. Can the blind lead the blind? A long line of blind men can all perhaps keep to the road, each clinging trustfully to the one in front, if the leader of them all is sighted; if he is blind too, they will all end up in the ditch” (P. T. Geach, *The Virtues*, p. 36).

All the more reason then to cling on to the traditional teaching of the Church. If the Church says, “This we teach and have always taught because it is God’s truth”, that is a claim to which we may listen. But if the story changes and we are told to believe one thing when previously we are required to believe the opposite then we may disobey with a good logical conscience. A divine revelation by its very nature as God’s truth cannot claim the right to change its mind.

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## LEGION OF MARY

Regarding J. C. L. Inman’s comment concerning the Legion in the June/July number of *Christian Order*, we are asked to state that, at the present time, “The Legion is established in over seventeen hundred dioceses throughout the world and is growing at a tremendous rate in most of the countries of South America, Korea and the Philippines. It is holding its own in Britain”.

We rejoice at this good news.

—Editor

# Religious Education

A SCOT'S SYMPOSIUM: 2

*PRO FIDE* (SCOTLAND)

## Some Specific Examples

Many of the examples intended to clarify Catholic Doctrine would seem to be more appropriate to the field of Social Studies and Modern Studies insofar that examples used might be construed as having overt secular and political overtones. There are those who would disagree with the citation concerning *Amnesty International* (Page 4, *3rd Year Resource Material for Pupils*), which presents it conclusively as being "*independent of any government, political movement or religious creed*".

There are many more who would consider the *Amnesty International Poster* which writes of Jesus as follows "... *He was a political prisoner* ..." etc., as being an incorrect slanted and minimising description of Our Redeemer, and that the exercises based on it are likely to give the totally wrong impression of his Messianic mission. On the same page there is a heading "Torture in South America" in which the case of Shelia Cassidy is presented, based on her own book *Audacity to Believe*.

While torture in any form must stand condemned, the singling out of individual cases and the naming of countries such as Chile, could be taken as prejudicial towards that country since torture is a world-wide problem and not the preserve of any one nation. Already the Western Press at this period of time has been accused of using certain Latin American countries as whipping boys for political ends (Chile has recently complained about this), an accusation, true or not, which calls into question the use of such specific examples for projecting the Catholic faith in the objective way that prudence demands. Objectivity is essential. The obvious danger of illustrating the Christian message through specified current affairs, or through the fleeting fads of 'pop culture', ought to have been learned by now.

## Note :

Amnesty International itself claims that over one hundred nations administer torture. What Amnesty and the popular media do not point out, however, is that ninety-five per cent of the world's refugees from oppression come from countries under Marxist rule, and that whatever takes place in Latin America—reprehensible as it is—is proportionately insignificant compared to the global oppression of that atheist system which is responsible for torture and terror on a vast scale such as the wholesale genocide brought about in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge. Pope Pius XI accused the World Press of a conspiracy which focusses on, and magnifies, diversionary 'trouble spots'. The compilers of R.E. texts should be careful not to become an unwitting part of that strategy by indulging in the current red herring of 'fascist' tyranny found in Latin America. With regard to this, it is noteworthy that the massive atrocities of the Marxist Sandanista Government of Nigaragua (well documented from Church sources) hardly merit a mention in the Press or on television.

## The Levelling Process

The whole method, which also seeks to appeal to the pupils through example or analogy within the limits of their experience, must always expose that message to misrepresentation by reducing it to the mere natural level.

In the *Teacher Guide for 3rd Year* on Page 96, there is such an instance. Under the heading which began '*Sacrifice: Love expressed in giving*', the aim is stated as —"*to help pupils to understand the meaning of sacrifice*", the gift of a box of chocolates from a boy to a girl is used by way of analogy.

Under the subheading '*Expressing our giving through a sign*' there follows this example (the emphasis has been given by the author):

**E.g.**

*"Boys goes with girl. He is very fond of her. He wants to show his fondness. He gives her a gift, a box of chocolates. The gift did not cost much but the girl is delighted. She recognises the motive of love which lies behind the gift. The girl accepts the gift and shows her acceptance by eating the chocolates and sharing them with the boy".*

After some extenuation of this, there is a bracketed summation which states

*"God shares the gift with us in Holy Communion, just as the girl shared chocolates with the boy"!!*

Apart from the choice of example for a Third Year age group which seems to fly in the face of the Church's advice about such situations connected with 'Boy goes with girl', the analogy reduces Christian truth to that natural level. Should any teacher be unwise enough to use it, the banality of the apparent comparison of God's gift of Himself in Holy Communion to a box of chocolates, in this or any other instance, can do nothing but denigrate that '*Inestimabile Donum*', the Holy Eucharist, the gift without measure, which, as the Second Vatican Council reminds us, contains the entire wealth of the Church, Christ Himself.

Something of the same kind of treatment is extended to the Sacred Humanity of Jesus in dealing with His early life. In the *1st Year Resource Materials for pupils* on Page 43, under the heading '*He Really was a Boy*', truculence of manner in the Boy Jesus can be drawn from the conjectural use of the word 'unwillingly'.

On the same page, under the heading '*He Really was a Teenager*', the term "wander off" is used with reference to the Mystery in Christ's boyhood when He withdrew Himself from the care of earthly parenthood to declare publicly, with the learned men of the Temple as witnesses, His Divine Mission as the Son of God.

A further distortion of this Gospel narrative — when Christ is found by His Mother in the Temple — continues with: "*and when Mary sounded annoyed, He said 'You don't understand, I just had to do it'. He probably got restless, working for His father . . .*" and so on.

The temptation to make use of this kind of speculative treatment of the Gospels in order to make the Humanity of Christ 'more meaningful' to particular age groups is one that any serious approach should avoid. It should be avoided because it is an incorrect and presumptuous violation of the Mystery—and it is a mystery—of the Incarnation, of God made Man.

This whole section is most unsatisfactory and unedifying. Its heading '*Jesus was like us in all things*' omits the two



vital words —“except sin”. In attempting to ‘popularise’ the humanity of Christ in this subjective way, the essential difference is missed between what God *suffered* to be done to Him in emptying Himself to become Man (as is this case in His Infancy, the first stage mentioned in the section), as opposed to what He *did* in *perfectly doing* the will of His Father *at all times*, being always *perfect* and always in possession of the Beatific Vision. This kind of conjectural presentation does not justly portray Jesus as the perfect example for mankind *at every stage of his life*, from Childhood to Calvary. He who was obedient unto death, Who came to do not His own Will but the Will of the Father Who sent Him. Such diminution of the perfect Christ as He grew in years during His time on earth, supports those erroneous views condemned by the Church.

On August 27th 1966, less than a year after the close of Vatican II, the Holy See alerted all bishops, of certain moral and doctrinal errors then circulating, among them being “. . . *A Christological humanism that would reduce Christ to the level of a mere human who only gradually became aware of His Divinity*”.

## Original Sin

Original sin is one of the key doctrines under attack in religious education today. It is a key factor in determining the validity of the recent programmes. Some texts omit it, while in others there is confusion and lack of definition concerning it. In the *3rd Year Teacher Guide* of the Pilot Schemes, there seems to be a mix-up between that *sin of generation* with which we are born as descendants of our first parents and about which Vatican II states: “*Adam’s sin is called Original Sin: it affects all men*”— and the other, accumulated burden of actual sin generated by mankind down through the ages. There is a clear and distinct difference between the two. Pope Paul VI in his Credo makes the distinction: “*We therefore hold, with the Council of Trent, that Original Sin is transmitted with human nature ‘not by imitation but by propagation’*”. The first statement, therefore, on Page 1 does not express this. It states: “*It is evident there is evil in our world. We are all born into it. The sinfulness of mankind affects us from the*

*beginning of our existence even before any conscious decision of our own. That is the state of Original Sin".* This statement does not square with the teaching of the Church. This confused understanding of Original Sin is repeated on Page 6, paragraph 5.

## Sin

While on the topic of sin, attention must be drawn to Page 14 in the *3rd Year Teacher Guide*, where the teacher is exhorted to write on the board: "*Sin is any deliberate thought, word, action or failure to act, which interferes with or prevents the good of a person or of society*". This definition does not comply with the teaching of the Church. Despite any qualification elsewhere, at no stage should anything less than the correct definition be submitted.

There is a popular tendency today to emphasise the social side of sin to the detriment of personal guilt and accountability and, above all and in the first place, *as a transgression against God*. This is all the more disturbing in view of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II's concern regarding the widespread loss of the sense of sin today. It would seem that there is a necessity for a constructive and reiterated emphasis on sin in relationship to the Ten Commandments, in which the basic test for proving our love for God is found — "*If you love Me keep My Commandments*" — and where the meaning of that self-control as a defence against this permissive age becomes synonymous with the transcendent appeal of God's Love.

The problems created by the method adopted in the Pilot Schemes become evident in dealing further with the subject of sin. On Page 20, *3rd Year, Resource Materials for Pupils*, under the heading '*Six Reasons For Why*' and with a subheading '*Everyone wants to be good, but everyone sins. Why is this?*' there are six paragraphs which seek to develop an understanding of sin. By paragraph 4 we read the following (the emphasis is in the text):

*"I choose to do something that is good now that MIGHT be bad later, for example — drinking, smoking, speeding, playing with sex, not doing homework. When I decide to get involved in these things I am only thinking about the immediate good feeling that I want to get from them. I*

*try to forget the possible evil that I have been warned about.*

There follow three questions, the first of which is:

*"Is choosing the good now that might be bad later always a sin?"*

The term 'good now' in relation to the 'choices' mentioned is very questionable indeed. The word 'good' seems to have taken on a new meaning, and within its doubtful context the placing of 'smoking' with 'playing with sex' shows an irresponsible disregard for the comparative moral gravity of the latter.

The confusion of the meaning of 'good' is further compounded in Paragraph 5 which goes as follows:

*"I choose to do something that is good now and will definitely be bad later on. For example: drunkenness, premarital sex, drugs, glue-sniffing, playing truant. I know that when I do the act the evil will follow"*

One might be inclined to ask, from out of the varied items in this witches' brew, is 'premarital sex' good now?

To round off the section, Paragraph 6 leaves 'good' to deal with 'bad'.

*"I choose to do something bad just because it is bad. For example: revenge vandalism, black magic, violence"*

Here again a list is presented in which 'black magic' with all its connotations of preternatural dangers is presented quite blandly among sins which might in the instance of a pupil's experience have a comparatively innocuous content. This whole section in a book for third year pupils is most disturbing and unsatisfactory and must give any teacher who attempts to make out of it some clear understanding of sin in keeping with the teaching of the Church — an almost impossible task. It is a prime example of teaching religious truths by a method which can only do more harm than good — using good in the accepted sense of the word!

## **Creation**

In most religious education programmes there seems to be a lack of forthrightness in presenting the teaching of the Church in regard to Creation. Yet this is clearly set out and developed by Pius XII in his Encyclical *Humani Generis*.

This teaching is again taken up and upheld by Vatican II as well as by Pope Paul VI, and as such must be included unequivocally in all programmes of religious teaching on Original Sin.

There is no doubt that much of the apparent reticence in this area is due to the unwarranted deference accorded to the theory of Evolution. On Page 35 in *3rd Year Resource Materials for Pupils*, the impression is given that this theory is proven fact. This is a common misconception disassociated from scientific truth, and carefully nurtured by those who promote this theory for ends not unconnected with a godless humanism. The fact that Evolution is only a theory and nothing more should be underlined. It should also be brought to notice that in its short history the theory has been associated with fraudulent expositions by those who would have it imposed on us at all costs. Young people should be made aware that a spurious indoctrination does exist, especially at popular levels through television, the Press and other mass media educators, where often a fake facuality is presented. Much of the contemporary attack upon religion, and the loss of faith among young people, has been caused by this vaunted theory which persists in a cloak of responsibility, "*as a 'dogma' which the priests (of Science) no longer believe but which they maintain for their people*".

These are the words of Professor Paul Lemoine, Director of the National Museum in Paris. This sentiment is echoed by Dr. W. R. Thompson, Director of The Commonwealth institute of Biological Control who, in his foreword of the Dent Centennial Edition of the *Origin of Species*, states: "*The rise of Darwinism has been accompanied by a decline in scientific integrity*".

*It is time that our religious education confronted this insidious challenge which seeks in the animalisation of Man an opportunity to rob us of our dignity and immortal inheritance, created in the image and likeness of God. A first step would be to make known to pupils its history of fraud, as well as the weighty opposition to this theory of evolution. In this we have a good start in the person of our own universally known Lord Kelvin.*

## Conclusion

These are some of the questionable areas in the first three years of the Pilot Schemes. They are by no means the only ones. Any observant reading will uncover others; but those dealt with will perhaps show how vigilant the parent or teacher must be in steering those in their care away from presentations which deviate from the teaching of the Church.

Admittedly the Pilot Schemes are up against the vogue of using a methodology which has its accent on subjective enquiry arising from a pupil-centred perspective which tends to encumber the message of Salvation — the revealed Word of God — and prevent it from being presented in a more 'direct' manner and in a 'completeness' suitable to the stage of the pupil's life.

In the broader sense there are also misgivings about vital concepts which do not appear to be explained adequately — for instance in the *2nd Year Resource Material for Pupils*, that of Divine Life is not expressed clearly, nor is its influence on the other truths brought out.

Throughout the 3rd Year Scheme there is scant mention of Our Lady and this, at a period of the pupil's life when her influence is desirable and necessary—apart altogether from the integral role she has in the plan of Redemption. There is also throughout the Schemes much which is extraneous to the teaching of the Catholic Faith and which could be omitted to advantage. As has been mentioned earlier, many of the exercises could be pruned to sharpen the important points of doctrine, especially in view of the time factor. The same treatment might be brought to bear on the discussion element within the exercises, especially in the light of Pope John Paul II's stricture that teachers of religion "*. . . must refuse to trouble the minds of the young . . . with useless questions and unproductive discussions, things that St. Paul often condemned in his pastoral letters*".

Perhaps such a pruning would permit more time for the concluding advice of the Holy Father: "*A certain memorisation of the Words of Jesus, of important Bible passages, of the Ten Commandments, for the formulae of the Profession of the Faith, of the liturgical texts, of the*



*essential prayers, of key doctrinal ideas, etc., far from being opposed to the dignity of young Christians, or constituting an obstacle to personal dialogue with the Lord, is a real need . . . We must be realists . . . Faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of memory-less catechesis. What is essential is that the texts that are memorised must at the same time be taken in and gradually understood in depth in order to become a source of Christian life on the personal level and the community level”.*

If it is required, it is hoped to make available later a more detailed list of questionable areas throughout the Pilot Schemes, with separate observations on the dangers presented by *Christ Among Us*, *Evolution*, and *Sex Education*.

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# The Hare and the Tortoise

LEO DARROCH

WHILE thinking about the current situation in the Catholic Church and in particular about the recent worldwide Indult allowing the celebration (albeit somewhat restricted) of the old rite of Mass, the story came to mind of Aesop's fable about the race between the hare and the tortoise.

Immediately following the euphoria of the Second Vatican Council two separate, distinct groups emerged within the Church. One group was a group after change, the Progressives, wishing to modernise the Church, to 'bring it up to date'. These were people in a hurry, the modernist hares in fact. The other group were more cautious, with an eye on tradition, fearful of the effect that too much change would have on the very fabric and wellbeing of the Church. In comparison these were obviously the tortoises. The vast majority of the laity and clergy, it must be said, were merely spectators.

And so in 1965 a race began. The situation was confusing at first and there were no rules as such but the objective was clear in the minds of both groups. It was quite simply the Mass.

## *Hares Make the Pace*

From the beginning there was very heavy betting in certain quarters on the modernist hares who had obviously been in secret training and whose ranks we now know included numerous clerics who appeared to have a greater interest in fame than fidelity. Tremendous sums of money were poured out in their support in the expectation of greater returns. Prominent among their backers were some of the great publishing houses. The notorious IDO-C (International Centre for Information and Documentation Concerning the Conciliar Church), for example, included representatives of Burns and Oates (now Herder and Herder)

and Sheed and Ward. The publishing industry was well aware of the considerable financial rewards to be gained in the printing of new missals, prayer books, hymn books et al.

### *Tortoises in Confusion*

The naive tortoises, caught in a state of confusion and disarray, were ill-prepared for such an onslaught. Left behind at the start in the mad headlong rush for change, they had to strive to make up ground in a situation that appeared hopeless. The odds on their staying the course, never mind winning, were very long indeed. The patrons of the hares rubbed their hands in glee and the supporters of the tortoises must surely have been tempted to tear up their betting slips in despair.

And so it was. The heralds of change, of the New Order (which in reality is not order but disorder) invigorated with their successes during the Council, set off at a cracking pace carrying all before them. They seemed unstoppable.

"What a dull, heavy creature", said Aesop's hare contemptuously describing the tortoise. The analogy can be drawn with the modernists hares equally contemptuous, dismissal of the old Mass. They saw it as being ponderous and antiquated, in need of rejuvenation. The venerable old rite was showing its age. It was time for it to be pensioned off and replaced with something a little more lively, more appropriate and relevant to our modern age.

### *Hares Catch the Eye*

It can be safely said, I think, that over the past twenty years or so it has been the dashing hares who have caught the eye and attracted the publicity. And, as things are in these modern times, in these days of anything goes, the more outrageous or bizarre the person or object — shades of the Mad March Hare — the greater the media coverage. Noise, movement, excitement became the name of the game. All is change and change is all. The old Mass couldn't hope to survive in this environment and was unceremoniously swept aside in the unseemly rush of the trendy and fashionable.

### *Tortoises Struggle On*

But back to the tortoises. Battling against a hierarchial and media headwind they struggled courageously forward. Unfortunately some became disheartened and gave up the struggle, the hares being considered too far ahead to be caught. Not a few more were ready to give up the race as a lost cause but were encouraged to persevere by the example and support of their friends and acquaintances. Others simply gritted their teeth, put their heads down and battled quietly on, refusing to give up, no matter what. In England and Wales the tortoises of the Latin Mass Society have been steadfastly battling along since 1965, no doubt occasionally downhearted and despondent but, in spite of all the disappointments, refusing to give up. How could they with the inspiring example of the Reformation martyrs to sustain them.

### *The Spectators*

To return to the spectators. What effect has the passing years had on these? I think it is true to say that on occasions some of them have abandoned their passive stance and joined the race on one side or the other. It is in the nature of things that some people will jump onto any bandwagon that passes by and will accept anything as long as it is in the fashion and a large number did so. It is also true and understandable that many will accept anything for a quiet life. This also happened in great part. A great number, however, simply lost interest; many in despair because the tortoises they favoured were so far behind as to be seemingly beyond hope. They walked away in droves, many never to return.

### *Arrogant Hares : Pride Before a Fall*

A further examination of the fable reveals that the hare became so pleased with himself he ran back and began to laugh at the tortoise for his clumsy efforts. He was so sure of success he lay down to take a nap and that was his undoing. He overslept and by the time he awoke he discovered that the tortoise had overtaken him and won the race.

Once again a parallel can be drawn. The modernist hares thought they had seen off over the years the challenge

of the traditionalist tortoises. They became somewhat disdainful of their opponents. Then it happened. A triumphant gathering was arranged for Rome in October 1984 under the self-congratulatory title, "The Liturgical Reforms: Twenty Years After. Approval and Perspective". Unfortunately for them the Holy Father with admirable assistance from Archbishop (now Cardinal) Augustine Mayer spoiled their party.

### *Discourtesy towards the Holy Father*

Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban speaking in Rome shortly after the Indult was announced, harshly criticised Pope John Paul for his decision. "The concession appears to move in a different direction from the ecclesiology of Vatican II which insisted on the involvement of the entire people of God in the Eucharist". This was an act of public discourtesy towards the Holy Father in his own diocese. Because the Holy Father had authorised a course of action which he, Archbishop Hurley, disagreed with, then the Holy Father, not himself, was out of step. Where is the obedience? Where is the humility? As is the case with many liturgical illuminati, the spiritual welfare of the laity (which the Indult is supposed to be concerned with) is something that rarely seems to enter their heads, for it is a fact that despite their insistence on the involvement of the entire people of God, a great number have completely rejected their dubious ecclesiology.

### *Tortoises in New Heart*

Well, all has now changed. Things are no longer as clear cut as they had seemed such a short time ago. The race has taken a dramatic turn and it is now more interesting than it has been for many a year. Quite simply, by approving the Indult the Holy Father has granted official recognition to the tortoises at the highest level. They have been filled with new heart. Now the odds have shortened dramatically and the hares and their supporters are running scared.

Who will win? Heaven knows but, for us at least, the result is not in doubt. A little episcopal encouragement if only out of loyalty and obedience to the Holy Father would no go amiss and, one never knows, they may reap a rich return.



# Book Review

## FREEMASONS

**The Brotherhood** by Stephen Knight : Granada; pp. 326: £8.95, now a paper-back, £2.50.

**Darkness Visible** by Walton Hannah; Augustine Publishing Co., Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7HL, U.K. pp. 232; £5.00.

This is an urbane book. As such, it has its advantages—also its disadvantages. There not a screech in it. Thereby it comforts the English mind, with its picture, fairly enough presented, of an inner group—a society of secrets rather than a secret society—busied with the self-promotion of its members; an extended version of what we think of in this country as the old-school-tie network, its members dedicated to extending to each other the proverbial helping hand. For the average reader the picture is disturbing, but hardly alarming. Nevertheless it appears to have had its effect. Already the police have been advised against Masonic membership. The Anglican Church has it under investigation (Dr. Runcie is not a Mason) and, by the time this review is published, a report published by the Methodist Church's Faith and Order Committee last June, will have been placed before the Methodist Conference with the request that it adopt the Committee's recommendation that Church members should not become Masons; that those who are Masons should reconsider their membership and that Conference should bar Masonic lodge meetings on Methodist premises.

Reasonably strong stuff this. Neither does it stop here. At the Madrid Congress of Socialist Parties of the European Community, battle-lines were drawn last April (*Sunday Times* 14/4/85) between British Euro-M.P.'s and their continental colleagues, led by the French Socialists. Instead of the mutual good-will expected to pervade a gathering designed, amongst other things, to welcome Spain and Portugal into the European Community, "verbal Exocets", in the words of one Euro M.P., "were flying in all directions". At the end of the day, when the shouting

had subsided with a decision to continue the debate at Strasbourg, Terry Pitt, Labour M.P. for the Midlands had this to say: "In all the explanations we have listened to no evidence has been produced that lessens my fear that decision-making in the E.E.C. can be manipulated by secret societies". He was quite right, in my view. A raw nerve had been touched. French and German opponents of his view protested too much, especially when Barbara Castle read out a substitute motion calling for an inquiry into secret societies.

How secret and what had they to hide? More than a good deal, I would say, where Masonic practice in mainland Europe is concerned. Well beyond the old-boy network as it may appear to a superficial observer in this country. Stephen Knight is, I believe, aware of this, but his book, which is well worth reading, is necessarily circumscribed by its confinement to Masonic practice in this country. There came to me, as I read it, the thought that its Author needed a much closer look at Masonic roots buried, as they are, in Gnosticism, which is older than Christianity itself; meaning by Gnosticism, the belief and practice of those self-appointed élite groups, who have always looked upon themselves as the bearers of that special knowledge, overlain and obfuscated, as it is in their eyes, by the clutter of formalised religion, particularly that of the Catholic Church. In this knowledge, say the Gnostics and their descendants, amongst whom we can number the Masons, hidden for so long from the mass of men, lies the key to life and to power in this world. Hence there can of necessity, be no love lost between Masonry and the Catholic Church. Between them conflict is inevitable. It is a matter of war to the death. Hence, the persistent attempt of one (Masonry) to subvert the other (the Catholic Church) which it sees as dedicated, through the formalization of religion at the hands of an entrenched clerical caste, to blind whole peoples to the light which is open to the Masonic elite and which alone can set men free. Masonry then, at base is anti-Christian and especially anti-Catholic though many Masons, especially in this country and from the lower degrees of the cult, would hate to hear it so described. For this very reason, paradoxically enough, it

remains a religious anti-religion; a rival to the Christian and Catholic Faith. To quote Clifford Longley, religious correspondent of *The Times* (27/5/85):

"Freemasons feel a sense of grievance at this phenomenon of churchly distaste, and a sense of not having been fairly tried. In the seventies, German Freemasons talked at length to German Catholic theologians and seemed to feel they had broken through the misunderstandings, until the (inevitably) negative verdict was delivered.

"It was as self-evident to them that they were pro religion, and therefore deserved Church support and encouragement, as it was to the churchmen that they were a syncretistical usurpation of ecclesiastical authority and a dangerous rival to the Christian faith".

Those who would go deeper into this question are strongly advised to read with care Walton Hannah's *Darkness Visible*, especially its masterly second part in description of Masonic ritual. The book is aptly sub-titled, *A Christian Appraisal of Freemasonry*. I refer to its fiftieth impression, now in soft-back, published in June, 1984. No fair-minded person can read this excellent and painstaking book without concluding to the fact that Freemasonry is, indeed, a religion, despite denials, however well-meaning, to the contrary.

Both these books are most highly recommended. Both merit serious study, especially in these days when the Catholic Church finds itself plagued—not for the first time—by a plethora of supposed Catholics, who merit the name of mini-Masons; bearers each of his own "new light", which he—and very often she—has the arrogance to promote as true in the teeth of the Teaching Authority of the Catholic Church to which Christ Our Lord has consigned His Revelation.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to think that active Masonic subversion is confined to the Catholic Church. The desire of its top "gurus" for power gives it an abiding interest in the destabilization of society—in the hope that they will emerge out of the chaos they have created to rule what is left of mankind after their foul work

is done. Here, Masonry is at one with contemporary Soviet Power. Which of the two rules the other I find difficulty to say. Was P2 in Italy instigated by the K.G.B. or was it simply the creature of the brutal free-booter Gelli's desire for supreme power? In the end-result, Italy came close to disintegration and NATO's southern flank was gravely threatened. Nearer home it could well be that the late Sir Roger Hollis' rise, against all the odds, to head M15 was due to a not unintelligent piece of Masonic back-scratching: his unlovely career, as it appears, set up not by the K.G.B., but by what was at the time a not untypical piece of Anglo-Saxon stupidity from which, as yet, we are by no means entirely free.

*Paul Crane, S.J.*

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